



GREG COX

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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WORK BEGINS ON NEW MEDICAL EXAMINER BUILDING *Chairman Cox, Officials Break Ground for \$85 million Project, First Phase of County Operations Center Redevelopment*

SAN DIEGO -- Chairman Greg Cox led fellow supervisors and other officials in breaking ground on the new Medical Examiner and Forensic Center, a state-of-the-art project that will allow the County to meet the region's growing needs and improve services to the public.

"This new facility is going to allow us to meet a growing caseload over the next 30 years and cope with increased demands during a large-scale disaster, said Cox, Chairman of the County Board of Supervisors.

The two-story project is being built at the County Operations Center in Kearny Mesa, at 5555 Overland Ave. The facility is expected to be completed by November 2009 and is the first project in a planned redevelopment of the County Operations Center.

The facility will house both the Medical Examiner and the County Veterinarian, combining the shared expertise of both offices. Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Glenn Wagner and County Veterinarian Dr. Nikos Gurfield agreed that by having their staffs working together under one roof, the County will be able to respond quicker to human and animal threats like avian flu and West Nile virus.

"We already consult on cases, but having us both together under one roof will expand the scope of our operations and greatly benefit the public," said Dr. Wagner.

"This will further the County's role as a leader in seeking solutions to protecting its residents," said Dr. Gurfield.

The County provides forensic services to other agencies and the larger facility will allow the County to generate revenues by expanding its services. The facility will also have classrooms for training.

The project is also being built with the public's comfort in mind. Each department will have its own lobby for the public. The Medical Examiner lobby will have multiple family counseling rooms to allow grieving family members more privacy and confidentiality when meeting with investigators.

The County is paying for the \$85 million project in cash.

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